

**THE EPISTLE TO THE
HEBREWS
WITH INTRODUCTION AND
NOTES**

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The Epistle to the Hebrews With Introduction and Notes by E. C. Wickham

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E. C. WICKHAM

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THE EPISTLE
TO
THE HEBREWS

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

E. C. WICKHAM D.D.

DEAN OF LINCOLN
HON. FELLOW OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD

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PREFATORY NOTE BY THE GENERAL EDITOR

THE primary object of these Commentaries is to be exegetical, to interpret the meaning of each book of the Bible in the light of modern knowledge to English readers. The Editors will not deal, except subordinately, with questions of textual criticism or philology ; but taking the English text in the Revised Version as their basis, they will aim at combining a hearty acceptance of critical principles with loyalty to the Catholic Faith.

The series will be less elementary than the Cambridge Bible for Schools, less critical than the International Critical Commentary, less didactic than the Expositor's Bible ; and it is hoped that it may be of use both to theological students and to the clergy, as well as to the growing number of educated laymen and laywomen who wish to read the Bible intelligently and reverently.

Each commentary will therefore have

(i) An Introduction stating the bearing of modern criticism and research upon the historical character of the book, and drawing out the contribution which the book, as a whole, makes to the body of religious truth.

(ii) A careful paraphrase of the text with notes on the more difficult passages and, if need be, excursions on any

points of special importance either for doctrine, or ecclesiastical organization, or spiritual life.

But the books of the Bible are so varied in character that considerable latitude is needed, as to the proportion which the various parts should hold to each other. The General Editor will therefore only endeavour to secure a general uniformity in scope and character: but the exact method adopted in each case and the final responsibility for the statements made will rest with the individual contributors.

By permission of the Delegates of the Oxford University Press and of the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press the Text used in this Series of Commentaries is the Revised Version of the Holy Scriptures.

WALTER LOCK

PREFACE

THE general purpose of this addition to the numerous Commentaries on the Epistle to the Hebrews is stated by the General Editor. But the particular Editor may be allowed to say one word as to his own view of what the purpose included.

His main desire in these pages has been to make the general argument of the Epistle clear and to exhibit it as a whole. The Epistle seems to him to be one that demands this more than other Epistles of the New Testament. Though in the form of a letter, and with the personal purpose of a letter, it is also a complete and artistic composition. There are no digressions properly so called. Even in what reads like a postscript the thoughts are put out in this form not by accident, but because the writer felt that in that way and at that moment they would most effectively answer his design.

It is in view of this character of the Epistle that the Editor has prefixed to the Commentary, besides the Summary of Contents, a full Paraphrase of the Epistle. A paraphrase is not a loose translation. It deliberately forfeits the power of reproducing in any way the literary form; but it aims at preserving, and in some degree making clearer than a translation can make it, the complete articulation of the thought. It is meant to be read with the Commentary, and as a chief part of it.

The Epistle has been to the Editor a special object of interest and study for many years, and if he has referred by

name to only a few and those the more recent of English commentators, this does not mean that he has not endeavoured to read at some time or other whatever seemed likely to throw light upon it. Three editions by English scholars he has frequently mentioned, as likely to be at hand to his readers and as raising questions which should be answered or as enabling him by such reference to express more clearly the view which he desired to set before them¹. It would be ungrateful if he did not name here, as he has not done otherwise, a book to which any English student of the Epistle must owe very much, Prof. A. B. Bruce's "Epistle to Hebrews: the first Apology for Christianity" (T. and T. Clark, 1899). The only other word that the Editor would say is one of hearty thanks to Prof. Lock for very much valuable advice and assistance.

¹ These are

(i) The great and exhaustive commentary of Bp Westcott (Macmillan & Co.).

(ii) The scholarly edition of Dean Vaughan (Macmillan & Co.), invaluable both for the method and for the results of its careful study of the Writer's words and phrases.

(iii) The slighter but fresh and ingenious edition of the Rev. F. Rendall (Macmillan & Co.).

E. C. WICKHAM

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